



October 7, 2020

Barbara Cape
President SEIU-West
200 – 747 46th Street West
SASKATOON S7L 6A1

Dear Ms. Cape:

Thank you for taking the time to reach out on these key issues impacting SEIU-West members and their communities. I also want to thank you and your membership for their hard work in these unprecedented times amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

I appreciate the opportunity to share our vision for a better Saskatchewan in response to your questions:

1. *Home care service allows people to access health care services without being in hospital or a long-term care home, but since 2014, home care services have been cut by 8% - what will your government do to ensure Saskatchewan's aging population has access to public home care services?*

Saskatchewan's New Democrats have concerns about the reduction in home care services for seniors under Scott Moe and the Sask. Party. We are committed to building the best home care program in Canada. That includes an additional \$50 million for hiring more staff to provide more services so seniors can stay in their homes longer and age in dignity. This commitment includes funding for healthcare staff, as well as other staff like cooks, groundskeepers, and cleaners to ensure seniors have the non-medical supports they need to stay in their homes for as long as they can.

2. *The spotlight has shone on health care during the COVID-19 pandemic, but understaffing remains in crisis – what will your government do to ensure residents, patients, and clients have effective staffing levels in order to provide quality health care? This question applies to both long-term care and acute care.*

We know short-staffing is the norm on the frontlines of long-term and acute care. Saskatchewan's New Democrats have committed to investing an additional \$100 million to end short staffing in long-term care and acute care to make sure patients in our hospitals and medical facilities can get the healthcare they need when they need it.

Saskatchewan New Democrats are also committed to legislating mandatory minimum care standards in long-term care.

3. *Community based organizations (CBOs) provide programs and services to children, those struggling with addictions, people facing mental health challenges, people living with intellectual or physical disabilities, and much more. However, CBOs do not receive stable funding – this results in lower quality care, job insecurity, and low wages. What will your government do to ensure CBOs have stable multi-year funding?*

Saskatchewan's New Democrats value the important work employees in community-based organizations do for their communities and believe it is past time for a fair deal that compensates these workers fairly. Unlike the Sask. Party's promise of four years of cuts and austerity, we will strive to establish stable and predictable funding for the CBO sector.

4. *COVID-19 has left many families and education workers concerned about the education plan – even before the pandemic, many were concerned about overcrowding in classrooms. What will you do to ensure reasonable class sizes and a safety plan for schools across the province?*

We know our class sizes were too big before the pandemic, and this situation has only gotten worse in these uncertain times. That is why Saskatchewan's New Democrats are committed to increasing funding to school divisions by \$125 million to allow divisions to hire more teachers, more educational assistants, and more cleaning staff to reduce class size, address complexity in the classroom, and keep our kids safe.

5. *Does your party have anything else it wishes to add that will benefit SEIU-West members and their communities?*

Saskatchewan's New Democrats are committed to a \$15/hour minimum wage for all Saskatchewan workers. We will also negotiate a fair contract with SEIU-West healthcare workers who have shamefully been left without a contract for more than 1,000 days by Scott Moe and the Sask. Party.

I want to thank you for the invitation to your Facebook Live event. Please also accept my best wishes for your health and safety during the challenging times our province is facing with COVID-19.

Sincerely,



Ryan Meili

Leader of Saskatchewan's New Democrats